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**TRAINING A PRIORITY NATIONAL GUARD TANK BATTALION:
(EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAINING WITH AN eSBn)**

by

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Preface

The purpose of this research is to study the effects of training a priority National Guard tank battalion with personnel from the active Army Component (A/C). Today's National Guard units have a more viable role now than ever seen before. Is the National Guard ready for their mobilization and deployment to a theater of operation? Can a team of A/C officers and Non-Commissioned Officers (one major, four captains, one warrant officer, and two senior noncommissioned officers) from the enhanced Support Battalion (eSBn) train and mentor one priority armor battalion in all facets of training? Finally, how do these priority units with eSBn's compare to both non-priority units and active duty units?

Abstract

The National Guard has a more viable role now then ever seen before. Is the National Guard ready for the next call up? Is Active Component / Reserve Component (AC/RC) enhanced Support Battalion (eSBn) concept effective in training a priority National Guard unit for activation? Additionally, how well does the National Guard priority unit compare to a non-priority unit? And furthermore, to an active duty unit?

In Aug of 1990, The 48th Infantry Brigade was alerted for possible activation to round out the 24th Infantry Division during the deployment to operation Desert Shield. By November of 1990, the brigade was placed on active duty. Before the 48th Brigade could deploy to southwest Asia (SWA), they first had to complete a Brigade level training exercise at Ft Irwin, California to validate their combat readiness. After almost 90 days of intensive training, the Brigade was not certified for the mission. Based on Desert Shield and Storm, the Senate Armed Services enacted Title XI in 1992. This title states that active headquarters of round-out units would take a vested interest in National Guard priority unit-training programs. In 1996, the enhanced Separate Brigades (eSB) replaced the round out unit concept. The new eSB concept identified fifteen (15) priority combat brigades within the National Guard. As a result of the Gulf War, Currently over 5000 active duty soldiers serve as coaches, trainer's, and mentors to Army National Guard and Reserve units.

This research identifies three specific areas. First, it addresses training concepts used by the Army and corporate America. These concepts assist in training effectiveness. Second, it

compares a non-priority unit, a priority unit, and an active duty unit's gunnery qualification data. Finally, it compares, contrasts, and analyzes active duty and priority units in the Combat Training Center (CTC) environment.

The research found that National Guard priority unit performed better than the non-priority unit and was very close to the active unit in gunnery skills. Furthermore, the priority unit and the active unit shared many evaluation observation similarities in a rotation at the National Training Center, therefore concluding that the eSBn are effectively training National Guard priority units and closing the training gap with their active duty counterparts.

Part 1

Introduction

Training is all encompassing and should be related to everything a unit does or can have happen to it.

— A.S. Collins

The purpose of this project is to study the effects of training a priority National Guard tank battalion with personnel from the active Army (A/C). Today's National Guard units have a more viable role now than ever seen before. Hence the question "Is the National Guard ready for their mobilization and deployment to a theater of operation?" How effectively can a team of six officers (one major, four captains, and one warrant officer) and two senior noncommissioned officers form an enhanced Support Battalion (eSBn) to train and mentor one priority armor battalion in all facets of training? Finally, how do these priority units with eSBns compare to non-priority units and active duty units?

The concept of an all-volunteer Army arose in 1973, just as the draft was ending from the Vietnam war. The goal of an all-volunteer Army was to ensure the United States would have a minimum active duty force required to deter and defeat threats against our nation and its allies. In addition, a well trained, well-equipped citizen soldier force was programmed to reinforce the active force in the event of crisis response that would require the Reserve and or National Guard.

On 2 August of 1990, the Iraq Army invaded the country of Kuwait, without provocation. In response to a possible invasion by the Iraqi Army, the King of Saudi Arabia requested military

assistance from former President George Bush. The President alerted and deployed the XVIII Airborne Corps Rapid Deployment Force to defend Saudi Arabia, a portion of this force was the 24th Infantry Division. The 24th Infantry Division's third Brigade was a roundout brigade (the 48th Brigade of the Georgia National Guard).

General Collin Powell recommended that the 48th Brigade be activated for federal service in early September of 1990. The 48th Brigade would not be deployed over seas until certified as combat ready by the Army. All National Guard combat arms units brought into active duty were required to successfully complete a rotation at the National Training Center (NTC). Once the National Guard were certified as combat ready, via intense desert warfare training from the NTC, the 48th Brigade and other roundout units would be deployed to SWA for combat operations. This period gave the units time to increase training effectiveness levels prior to deployment. The training period for National Guard roundout units to deployment status was scheduled to last approximately 90 days. Upon certification of combat readiness, the units would be deployed to SWA. In September of 1990, the 48th Brigade was activated for active federal service. In November, the unit deployed to NTC for combat training and certification. After three months of rigorous and extensive training, the Army leadership had not certified them for combat. By the time the combat operations ended on 28 February 1991, no National Guard priority units had deployed to the Gulf War.

The Senate Arm Services enacted Title XI in 1992. This title stated that the headquarters of the roundout units would take a vested interest in their unit's training program. In June of 1999, the first Integrated Active Component / Reserve Component (AC/RC) divisions were activated. The active commander was instructed to issue training guidance and approve all training for his National Guard priority brigades. Furthermore, premobilization training would focus on being

inextricably linked to post-mobilization training. Infantry, Armor and, Cavalry units will focus on platoon maneuver and gunnery during pre-mobilization. The requirement for progression to company level training is platoon proficiency based on approval of the brigade commander. The respective commanders are also responsible for training the staff and all facets of the Military Decision-Making Process (MDMP),¹ these include staff roles and responsibilities, mission analysis, course of action development, and orders production.²

As of 1999, there are over 5000 active soldiers assigned to assist in training, coaching, and mentoring the leadership of these priority National Guard units. Not all these units are in the AC/RC division, but play a significant role in our national defense. Training of these units is paramount to our success in the next major war or theater of operation. The National Guard is deploying more than ever in our nations history. It is the duty of the enhanced Support Battalion (eSBn) to make sure they are ready and well trained when called to active duty.

Notes

¹ FORSCOM/ARG/USAR Regulation 350-1, United States Army Forces Command, May 1998.

² Staff Organization and Operations, FM 101-5, Headquarters, Department of the Army, 31 May 1997.

Part 2

Thoughts on Training a National Guard Priority Tank Unit

General Dwight Eisenhower was once asked to explain his leadership style. He placed a piece of string on a table and said that if someone pushed it, it would just bunch up and go nowhere. But if someone pulled it, it would go anywhere that person chose. An effective leader is one who can pull the string.

— David R. Torrence

According to the National Military Strategy, the purpose of the Armed Forces “is to deter and defeat threats of organized violence to our country and its interests.”¹ If deterrence fails, we must always be prepared for possible combat. For deterrence to be effective, our enemies must know the Army is well trained in all aspects of war fighting skills. Effective training molds humans and machines into effective, cohesive, combat-ready units. To be successful in combat, the Army must train continually in all elements of terrain, weather, and at day or night to develop and maintain its soldiers at combat-ready status.

In this chapter, I will discuss what my qualifications are to comment on the concept of training. What must happen before training starts and how concepts of training can be implemented according to one military theory and one civilian theory. Additionally, I will discuss techniques in planning training, motivating for training and gaining feedback to improve future training.

As an Army officer, I served in Europe as a tank platoon leader during the cold war. As a captain, I served in a tank battalion with the 24th Infantry Division during the Gulf War. I

commanded a tank and headquarters company. As well as served two and a half years in AC/RC as a Senior Armor trainer and one year as a Team Chief to a priority National Guard unit. Additionally, I was assigned to the NTC as an Observer/Controller, evaluating in 22 rotations as a coach and mentor to commanders and staffs to include two National Guard priority units.

I believe that training at all levels builds the self-confidence, promotes teamwork, and increases professionalism within the organization. This is seen at NTC daily as units improve on training. Effective training requires the commitment of personal time, energy, and guidance. Once a commitment to training has been established, and is given practical support, such as time or money, the desire for effective training is more likely to be reinforced and maintained.

Before Training Starts

Training involves time, people, equipment, facilities, money and the wisdom to determine what training needs to be conducted. The training strategy determined sets the conditions for achieving the Army's objective of trained and ready units.² Since most of these factors are in a constant state of change, and since the results are not easy to quantify, training for a mission or a project can be very difficult.³ The Army tries to ensure all eSBn team members are fully qualified in their duty positions before arriving to National Guard priority units. Additionally, all eSBn soldiers receive Observer Controller Training (OC/T) certification from either their A/C higher headquarters or O/C training at a Combat Training Center (CTC). This is to certify they are proficient in coaching, mentoring, and After Action Review (AAR) training. The eSBn charter is to assist the National Guard priority unit in achieving its training strategy and to develop the leaders and soldiers within the unit. Therefore eSBn soldiers must have the proper training before training starts.

Learning How to Train

Training requires leaders to be able to observe and assess training at all echelons, based on limited training time allowed, especially to the RC. Priority units must use multi-echelon-training techniques, coupled with a mixture of live, virtual, and simulation to achieve premobilization training requirements. Too often not enough emphasis is placed on training requirements. According to Ben Britt, an author on training management, reported the results of a 1993 survey of training professionals that revealed of all the respondents from around the United States, an alarming 26 percent said that they are one-person training departments.⁴ This statistic was derived from respondents who subscribe to *Training Magazine* and have companies with at least 50 employees. I have seen these same one-man teams in company and battalion priority units. This is primarily due to budget cut backs. The role of the eSBn is to assist these units in training, utilizing many of the same systems as the active Army such as the Standard Army Training System (SATS). The effective use of the eSBn and training systems can assist in balancing the manpower shortages that units experience.

A solid training program can solve a variety of problems within an organization. Soldiers, active or National Guard, want training to be important and meaningful. "People are looking for job satisfaction and job challenge, and we have to be attentive to that."⁵ We can not afford to waste people's precious time when training to defend or support our country.

According to Alan Weiss, of the Summit Consulting Group, East Greenwich, Rhode Island, "I think the ultimate objective of the trainer is to be a change agent to help others develop the skills necessary to operate in a changing world."⁶ This is why the Army has provided priority units with active duty personnel. These "change agents" are responsible for ensuring planned, effective, and realistic training is being conducted. Many Army units have adopted the 8 Step

Training Model (8 STM) used to assist in training effectiveness. Currently, the Commander of Operations Group (COG) uses this model at the NTC to assist commanders in planning and training. The COG trains on the average of twelve brigade commanders and 75 battalion commanders a year. Additionally, the former commander of the 1st United States Army endorsed this model.

As a former OC and AC/RC trainer, I have used the 8 STM in developing training plans to enhance training effectiveness. The first step in the 8 STM is to plan the training. This involves resourcing the training to meet the commander's intent and training requirements. The second step is to train and certify the leaders in the training to be conducted. They need to become subject matter experts (SME) on the task to be trained. The third step is to reconnoiter the training site. The purpose of this step is to ensure the training to be conducted supports the commander's intent for training. The forth step is to issue a training plan for the specific training to be conducted. This step must be done early enough to provide time for rehearsals, which is step five. The sixth step to execute and evaluate the training. The seventh step is to conduct the AAR. This involves a recap of the training, observations of strengthens and weaknesses of the unit, and determining ways to sustain success and improve on weaknesses. Participants at all levels of training identify these observations to include the senior O/C who facilitates the AAR. The final step in the 8 STM is retraining. This involves the application of the previous seven steps. The success of the mission accomplishment relays on the effort put forth in the 8 STM.

The eSBn's application of the 8 STM will enhance and re-enforce the training and lessons learned during training. This model is designed for use at all levels of training. The real quantifier of its effectiveness is the level of detail the trainer desires to achieve the end-state. My

experience has proven, the greater the detail in all the steps, the greater the over all effectiveness of the training.

The 8 STM is one way some Army units' train but this is not the only way to train. The National Guard is mainly comprised of citizen soldiers. Many citizen soldiers are managers and leaders within their civilian profession. They may not be familiar with the Army's training practices. A possible consideration is for the eSBn to also use civilian models for training. Civilians have been training within their businesses for years. In his book titled *Teaching the Elephant to Dance*, by James Belasco, an author on training management, he describes a civilian perspective on training. His model is broken down into four steps.

The first step is to determine your vision statement and make this vision known throughout the organization. The leader must personally demonstrate the vision with his/her actions. The leader must also set expectations and let this be known "expect it or forget it."⁷ If they don't understand the importance of vision, they will never execute it.

Change is the second step in the model. Change in tactics and or procedures require individuals and organizations to become adaptable. Change within an organization is a "continuous process and not a destination."⁸ Too often people become complacent in their duties. A trainer must always remember "people learn slowly and forget easily."⁹ This is why this model incorporates refresher training for the individual and organization, this keeps skills honed and refined.

The third step is Preparation for training. In this model preparation of upcoming events is critical. The old mentality "We've always done it this way" is limiting the organization's progression. Thus we focus on becoming a SME in your department. Do not try to train every task at once. "The longest journey is made one step at a time."¹⁰ Break larger more complicated

tasks up into smaller pieces, therefore making them more attainable. Additionally, Step 3 requires the organization to look forward and anticipate potential obstacles and develop contingency plans around them.

The final step, in the training model is called “create tomorrow” this area focuses on two specific areas, strategies and resources. The first area to discuss is strategies. Within the strategy, the leadership must assess where they currently stand and then determine their desired end-state. Once these two points have been defined, they must determine how to get to the end-state. Belasco states, one way to achieve and monitor a strategy is to determine specific events and track the progression in these events to determine if the strategy is working. These events provide opportunity to adjust or refine your strategy. The second area is resources. The leadership must understand what resources are available and properly employ them as required. Do not over extend resources because they may be limited, instead, use them wisely and to your advantage. “The sacred cow may not be so sacred after all, particularly when the organizations life is on the line.”¹¹ These resources include people. In order to be successful you must get the best people for the job if you want to survive.

Though this model is somewhat different than the 8 STM. It is a model developed and understood by civilians. Perhaps eSBn soldiers could adapt to train National Guard soldiers with this model if required. However, I believe the key to success in any model is the level of detail applied to a particular training model.

The view of training is different especially when the training concept is new. The main goal is for the trainer to bring the training to a level that everyone can understand.¹² The role of the eSBn team is to know their target audience and bring effective training to a level and in a concept they (the citizen soldier) can understand.

Selling Training Ideas to Leadership

The Yearly Training Plan (YTP) is issued to subordinates approximately one year out. The unit commander has about 4 months to devise his yearly training plan prior to the Yearly Training Brief (YTB). Planning and training an organization requires detailed planning and analysis if it to be sold to the chain of command. The battalion commander must quickly get his plan out and approved by his higher headquarters. The role of the eSBn team is to assist his counter part in developing the training plan early. This plan must support the higher headquarters plan. A key piece of this is the eSBn team leader's understanding the active associate unit commander's training guidance, as well as the National Guards commander's guidance, in order to properly assist his priority unit counterpart.

Motivation Gets the Job Done

Motivation can be a major concern for any trainer. A motivating environment gives people a sense of satisfaction, responsibility, growth, recognition and achievement.¹³ If the trainer can establish a linkage of why this is important he/she will gain the attention of the students. As a trainer, I often apply a training or life experience from the NTC, the Gulf War, quotes, or movie clip to gain the attention of the soldiers.

Keep the training interesting, challenging, and relevant to the job. Don't let trainee's become passive listeners and thus not participate in the training. According to Tom Peters, the author of *In Search of Excellence* lessons from America's best-run companies; "man's waiting for motivation."¹⁴ One motivational technique used is to eliminate threats and punishment from the program. Stress from failure can cause the individuals to lose concentration on what he/she is being taught. Find out the problems and correct them before moving on with the next lesson. It is better to know a little about something, then a lot about nothing.¹⁵

The eSBn trainer can use their full-time army experiences to apply this to the part time citizen soldier. If possible, have a citizen soldier apply an experience he has witnessed. This experience would be seen through a civilian perspective and might have a greater impact on motivating. The important issue is for the eSBn to get the soldiers interested in the training.

Communications and Feedback, During and After Training

The role of the eSBn is to be a guide and a mentor to the National Guard counterpart. It is imperative that the eSBn understands how to communicate effectively with the unit. I have found in order to effectively communicate, a positive working relationship is important. Additionally, talking **to** the priority unit was better than talking **at** the priority unit. This positive communication skill enhanced my ability to provide feedback in a non-threatening manner.

Feedback is a very important part of training. If no feedback is given, then negative or poor training will continue. In general, human nature makes people apprehensive about giving feedback to someone. Trainers must remember that feedback is a two way process. All parties need to openly listen to each other's point of view. The first rule of AARs at the NTC is "No thin skin." Feedback brings reality back into focus and perhaps brings to light a new perspective on an old issue. Feedback needs to be broken down into four elements according to Mary Mavis, the author of *Painless Performance Evaluations*. The first element is observation, the trainer must base feedback on the observations made of the soldier. Observations hold the key to resolving any confusion about the training. The second element is assessments. Why did the training happen that way? Did the soldiers know the tasks, conditions and standards or were they setup for failure from the start. The third element is the consequences. All actions have consequences - some are desirable and others are undesirable. Consequences can vary from person to person as long as the standards of training are not compromised. The final element of

feedback is development. People need time to grow and develop. Goals with target dates for achieving the desired results must be set for the soldiers at this time.¹⁶ The NTC AAR process almost mirrors Mavis's feed back model for civilians. The NTC AAR covers in three points. The first is what happened, second why it happened and finally, how will we improve and train. Either the Mavis or NTC models are acceptable feedback mechanisms, the important issues is for the eSBn to use a feedback model the priority unit will understand.

This chapter has focused the incorporation of different training models to use. It has also addressed motivational techniques and the development of training plans. Finally, the chapter focused on communications skills and two different models to use when providing feed back.

The next chapter focuses on intense training data and the methods used to gather training data over a 5-month period. This data will assist in determining if the eSBn has been effective in training priority National Guard tank battalions.

Notes

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¹⁴ Peters, Thomas J. *Insearch of Excellance* , New York: Timer Warner March, 1984, 55.

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Part 3

Results and Findings

Training in all its phases must be intensive...It must be intelligently directed so that every individual (soldier), including the last private in the ranks, can understand the reason for executions he is called upon to make.

— Dwight D. Eisenhower

My research was designed to determine if an eSBn team has been effective in training and assisting a priority National Guard tank battalion. The information used in this procedure came from a variety of sources and personal experience in this particular field. They are: gunnery qualification data, lanes training data, a CTC comparisons, and finally, a Rand Corporation post training assessment on priority National Guard units.

The first area covered is the gunnery data. Tank gunnery consists of 10 engagements utilizing day and night gunnery skills and incorporating all facets of the tank fire control system. The sample for gunnery data came from the following units: a National Guard tank battalion with an eSBn team assigned, a non-priority National Guard tank battalion without eSBn team support, and an active duty tank battalion. The second instrument is tank maneuver lanes data. Tank lanes consist of individual, crew collective, and leader tasks. These tasks are evaluated IAW Army doctrine and the Mission Training Plan (MTP). These results were based on two iterations of lane results (The 1st iteration had no eSBn support, the 2nd iteration had eSBn support). The third instrument used was IAW Army doctrine and applied the Battlefield Operating Systems (BOS) From FM 100-5 *Operations*. The NTC provided an evaluation on both

active and National Guard units within the same year. Finally, the forth instrument was the RAND Corporation information on the training readiness of the priority National Guard unit prior to a deployment to the NTC and training post NTC.

Mobility, maneuver, and firepower are essential to the success of a combat arms unit. The tank 120mm main gun cannon is no good if it can not be properly employed on the battlefield. Tank gunnery is an on going process if one wants to be successful. In order to be successful a crew must follow these steps. The first priority is to establish tank crew stability. Crew stability is better in the National Guard then in an active battalion. Crew stability for a guard crew is about 2 to 3 years. To where an active battalion is about 1 year to 1½ years. Crews seem to disband for the same reasons, which are a promotion and/or ascension in the unit. Once a crew is stabilized, the second is to meet the requirements set forth in the Tank Gunnery manual, FM 17-12. This manual states that all crew members must pass a tank crew gunnery skill test (TCGST), all crews must pass a specific requirement in the Unit Conduct of fire Trainer simulator (UCOFT), and crews must execute preliminary gunnery tables prior to shooting qualification gunnery (Tank Table VIII). Gunnery requirements are the same for active and National Guard units.¹

In May of 1998, when I arrived at my priority National Guard unit they had completed over half of the requirements for TCGST. Crews had already met the requirements on the UCOFT. I asked the commander if he wanted my team to assist in training or assist in the evaluations of his crew. The Commander felt I could provide feed back for incorporation into next years training plan and he wanted my team to focus on the lane training aspect of the annual training.

As we approached the preliminary tank tables, crews were not shooting well. This was due to slow target identification, slow crew duties, and the lack of understanding of the gunnery

standards and scenario. On qualification day, scores did not improve. The unit only qualified 5 of 30 crews on the first run. Within the next two days 24 of 25 crews would qualify as “second time qualified” or “Q2” (see table 1).

Upon the return to home station, the commander, his trainers, and I conducted an AAR on our home station gunnery plan. We identified that most companies were not capable of planning, conducting, and evaluating their own training. The TCGST turned out to be training. No true standardized evaluation was conducted IAW FM 17-12-1 (Tank Gunnery manual) and crews were not properly trained for qualification gunnery. The commander and I decided we would have to take a new approach to next year’s home station gunnery plan.

The commander’s new plan was to use the eSBn team to assist in planning the company’s training plan. The unit commander’s would be responsible for the execution of the training plan. The final phase was to have the eSBn conduct the evaluation phases of each training event. This plan was executed thought out the home station gunnery cycle. Even during preliminary tank tables, the eSBn (with support from TSB) conducted evaluations and AARs for crews.

Tank Gunnery Qualification Data

The results of this plan paid significant dividends. Tank crews improved in 5 of the 6-day time engagements and yet had no change in one engagement (see figure 1). Furthermore, 3 of the 4 night engagements also improved (see figure 1). While one engagement did not improve from the previous year, it was still a qualified engagement of 70 points or above. The scores improved an average of 7.8 points per engagement with 16 of 28 crews first run qualified and all remaining crews Q2 (see table 2). This compared to a year earlier when 5 of 30 qualified first run.

Not all National Guard units are priority units nor are they resourced for priority of required readiness. Yet all units still must meet the same tank gunnery requirements. Non-priority units do not get the eSBn support like priority units. Hence, the non-priority unit doesn't have additional trainers and evaluators from an eSBn to assist in home station planning and training. Additionally, non-priority units funding and manning requirements are lower then priority units. As seen in Figure 2, a priority unit out scored a non-priority unit in 9 of the 10 tank gunnery engagements during qualification gunnery. The priority unit scored an average of 9.9 point's better per-engagement during qualification. Additionally, the priority unit averaged 7 of 10 qualified engagement while the non-priority unit averaged 4 of 10 qualified engagements.

To further compare gunnery data, two priority's unit's Tank Table VIII are reflected in figure 3. This was done to compare two different priority units and see how close their scores are to each other. Unit 1 out scored unit 2 in 7 of the 10 engagements by an average of 5.6 points per engagement. Additionally, unit 1 averaged 8 of 10 qualified engagements while unit 2 averaged 7 of 10 qualified engagements. It appears that these two priority units are comparable to each other in their gunnery proficiency.

The final gunnery comparison is that of active, priority and non-priority tank battalions. As seen in figure 4, the active battalion out scored the priority unit in 5 of 10 engagements with one engagement a tied score. The active unit out scored the priority by an average of 9 points. The active unit out scores the non-priority unit in 8 of the 10 engagements and by an average of 102 points. The priority unit out scored the non-priority unit in 9 of 10 engagements and by an average of 93 points. The priority unit's gunnery skills were much more comparable to the active units skills then the non-priority unit gunnery skills.

Maneuver Lanes Training Data

Tank gunnery is just one aspect of comparing training data in relationship to see if the eSBn are helping priority units. Another key area is the maneuver training a unit does in-preparation for a formal evaluation during annual training. The unit commander and eSBn team will determine what tasks need to be trained to support this operation. These tasks are assigned to individual platoons to train on for a formal evaluation. Additionally, company commanders are assigned collective tasks for an informal evaluation. [Priority units only train at platoon level unless they have been assessed by the commander as attaining a minimum of 70% “T” (trained) or “P” (needs practice) on critical task/drills to support company mission essential task list (METL).]² These tasks are initially taught in the classroom environment. The unit or the eSBn team member will conduct these classes. (In my priority unit the commander requested that my team members serve as assistants for training and to be prepared to conduct the training.) Upon completion of classroom instruction the training then is done on a reduced-scaled terrain models. The third step is a full-up mounted rehearsal with the eSBn member serving as an evaluator. This evaluation is controlled at battalion level to determine strengths and weaknesses of the platoon (see figure 3 thru 5). These evaluations were conducted IAW Training Evaluation and Outlines (TE&O) from the MTP used to evaluate all units.

Upon return to home station, the eSBn team and National Guard leadership conducted a post AT lanes AAR using the TE&Os and Task summary sheets to modify the training plan to focus on the weak areas. These areas were emphasized during training weekends and during a 2-day train-up prior to the formal evaluation. The evaluated platoons improved in 26 of the 42 tasks evaluated. Prior to the lane evaluation, the unit rated a 52% “P” or “T” rating. After the formal evaluation the units “P” or “T” rating improved to 78%. Over the past two years this training

model has been very effective. The platoons and company leadership have steadily improved from initial informal evaluation to the final formal evaluation.

Combat Training Center Data

The dynamics of training and funding change drastically when a priority unit conducts a Combat Training Center (CTC) rotation. The priority units Brigade Combat Team (BCT) will execute a CTC rotation focused at the Battalion Task Force (Bn TF) level once every eight years. In order to conduct a CTC rotation, priority units must meet the following requirements: First, all Platoons must be able to achieve a 70% in “P” or “T” in the CTC scenario supporting the unit METL. Second, Crews must qualify a Tank Table VIII within one year of rotation if conducting live fire operations. Third, all crews must be able to perform operator level maintenance on assigned vehicles.³

Companies must have at least 2 of 3 platoons in each company achieve 70% “P” or “T” on platoon selected battle tasks. Companies must also have 75% or higher authorized strength before attending the rotation. Furthermore, companies must demonstrate the ability to conduct rearm / refuel / refit and maintenance operations.⁴

Staffs must demonstrate their ability to employ the MDMP during a simulation exercise called Brigade Combat Battle Staff Training (BCBST). This exercise is done through a series of examinations and practical exercised within 12 months of the CTC rotation. Additionally, Battle Combat Training Program (BCTP), Virtual Training Programs (VTP), and Leader Training Program (LTP) programs provide the commander an external assessment of the combat effectiveness of his staff. These tools assist the staff in the planning process, synchronization of assets, and operations order production. Furthermore, all units must participate in the Leader Training Program (LTP) 120 days prior to the CTC rotation. The purpose of this exercise is to

provide a training on the Military Decision-Making Process (MDMP) culminating with a simulation exercise.⁵

Units attending CTC rotations execute operations in relationship to their Mission Essential Task (METL). These types of missions are determined by the unit's chain of command. For an active duty division, the division commander is the approving authority for the missions a unit will execute during CTC. A priority National Guard unit's approving authority for a CTC is the integrated Division Command in conjunction with the State Adjutant General, IAW Forces Command regulation 350-2.⁶ These rotations are then designed to support the specific unit's mission and capabilities.

No two CTC rotations are ever alike in terms of missions and results---just as no two units are ever alike. The next section analyzes two take home packets from a priority unit and an active battalion; it addresses unit strengths, weaknesses, and compares differences between the two types of units. These comparisons are broken down into the battlefield operating systems.

Battlefield Operating Systems / Compare and Analysis

Intelligence

A/C: The Task Force intelligence section came to the CTC fully manned. The active unit did not fully utilize their terrabase capabilities. The Intelligence section did not work efficiently in the area of time and personnel management. The section worked 12 hours on 12 hours off with little regard to mission requirements. Additionally, the officers were doing all the work and the subordinates were watching. This kind of plan only has a couple days of life during a CTC rotation before sections become ineffective. The section was successful in battle tracking and situational awareness through out the rotation.

Priority Unit: Task Force intelligence section came to the CTC fully manned. The unit did not have a terrabase or terrain book to assist in terrain analysis. The intelligence section worked as efficiently as possible, but was not used to operating under these time constraints. The intelligence section properly applied all situational templates to enemy course of action. The section did not regularly conduct shift change briefs and information was lost over time.

Analysis: The operations within both intelligence sections are a strong suit within the Tactical Operations Centers (TOC). The A/C has an advantage because, A/C units conduct more command post training exercises than a priority unit. These exercises validate standard operating procedures and exercise command, control and information systems. Priority units only conduct command post exercises once a quarter and these exercises are at most 48 hours and often not continuous operations. Therefore, units are not used to working long hours over a long period of time and SOP are not exercised and validated by the unit. More exercises for priority units will increase their effectiveness in the application of this BOS.

Maneuver

A/C: The Task Force was deployed to the CTC with three tank companies, one infantry company, a headquarters, and headquarters company. In the area of planning the active unit was successful in assigning tactical tasks to each mission and the employment of the MDMP. Subordinate leader's understood their tasks, purpose, and commanders desired end-state. This will assist the commander in his role for the over all big picture in supporting the BCT and assisting subordinates in their task and purpose. The unit needs an emphasis on Task Force rehearsals. Often these rehearsals became war-games and not rehearsals. Additionally, the unit had problems in achieving mutual support and massing at the decisive point.

Priority Unit: Task Force was deployed to the CTC with three tank companies, one infantry company, a headquarters, and headquarters company. The priority unit followed the MDMP (all but 2 missions). The unit needs to completely understand mission analysis and COA development. Both units need an emphasis on Task Force rehearsals. Often these rehearsals became war-games and not rehearsals. Additionally, each unit had problems in achieving mutual support and massing at the decisive point. The priority unit needs to improve on the transition from movement to maneuver. This weakness can result in a loss of momentum in the attack.

Analysis: Task Forces rehearsals are a weakness seen throughout the Army. The only way to improve is by placing a greater emphasis on training. Additionally, the priority units need to continue training on the MDMP under time constraints and transition from movement to maneuver. These training weaknesses can be improved by training simulators such as SIMNET.

Fire Support

A/C: The task Forces demonstrated proficiency in clearing fires safely, forward observer skills and digital communication. The unit needs to work on understanding and implementing the Essential Fire Support Task (EFST) issued by the TF commander. As a result the unit had difficulty in developing a synchronized scheme of fire throughout the battles. They conducted fire support rehearsals after each task force rehearsal. This reduced confusion during the execution of the operation.

Priority Unit: Task Forces demonstrated proficiency clearing fires safely, forward observer skills and digital communication. The units need to understand and implement the Essential Fire Support Task (EFST) issued by the TF commander. Additionally, the priority unit did not execute fire support rehearsals to standard throughout the rotation.

Analysis: In general, both artillery units understand how to employ their weapons system. The problem for both the active and National Guard units is the implementation of the EFST. As a result the fire support systems could not quantify the required end-state with realistic terms in volume, duration, or amount of destruction, suppression, and/or obscuration, thus not supporting the scheme of maneuver. The priority unit did not conduct fire support rehearsals, prior to the mission. These rehearsals enhance synchronization prior to mission execution. The priority must take advantage of rehearsals to reduce any fog and friction before and during the battle. Artillery skills are technical and perishable. Opportunities to train on these skills can not be missed.

Engineer

A/C: (Offensive only) Task Force was weak in deliberate breaching planning. The failures to war-game the breach resulted in an unsynchronized plan. Engineer assets were often not assigned clear tasks and purpose to support the maneuver forces. The unit conducted a mounted rehearsal prior to the attack. This rehearsal focused on security and reduction fundamentals with little emphasis on suppression or obscuration, resulting in unsynchronized operations.

Priority Unit: On the offensive, the priority failed to conduct IPB to standard. Commanders had a lack of situational awareness of the enemy obstacle plan. Therefore, they were limited on the detailed planning for deliberate breaching operations. The TF developed a plan where they would “breach” the obstacle with engineers and a tank company using plows. No consideration was given to C2 of the breach force. This led to confusion during execution of the operations. Additionally, commanders did not properly plan situational obstacles through their defense in-sector. Therefore, having limited effect on the enemy’s advancement.

Analysis: (OFFENSIVE ONLY) The A/C unit has a greater opportunity to work with attached units. The priority unit needs to develop a habitual working relationship with task

organization units. These units need to conduct planning and training exercises. Examples are classes on breaching, developing a plan, rehearsal, execute training, and conduct AAR. This training and execution can not only happen during A.T. and CTC rotations if the priority units want to improve. The eSBn must get the priority unit to understand and execute Task Force level training if they want to be an effective force on the battlefield.

NBC

A/C: The active unit was unprepared to operate in an NBC environment. Reporting was lacking and SOPs were not followed. The active unit identified shortages in Chemical Defense Equipment (CDE), but was too late to react to these deficiencies. On a positive note, The NBC NCO from the battalion coordinated for a decontamination of “dirty” vehicles in less than 4 hours (Army standard 6 hours). While performing all his other responsibilities.

Priority Unit: Over all, the priority unit performed well during the rotation. Detailed NBC IPB was provided to the commander on possible NBC strike. The section needs to be more aggressive in NBC reporting. The workload between the Chemical Officer and his NCO need to be split equally, they make a good team but the Task Force could better utilize their expertise if they did not work the same shift. Finally, the Chemical section needs to track CDE and maintain an accurate inventory of supplies throughout the task force.

Analysis: (This applies to both units, same weakness noted) NBC was over looked until the units were attacked with chemicals. CDE and supplies are critical to the survivability of the task force. Early warning and detection are also critical to unit survival. Therefore, SOPs, checklists, and tracking systems must be established. These systems must be developed during home station training. Additionally, they must be executed during training opportunities.

ADA

A/C and Priority units: In comparison both Air Defense platoons were lacking in the areas of time lines, troop leading procedures and the conduct of pre-combat inspections. Both units did make significant strides in improving these deficiencies. Additionally, both ADOs needed to coordinate more with the Task Force commander for guidance and priorities.

Analysis: (This applies to both units) This was the weakest BOS for both types of units. I'm convinced Task Forces know how to employ ADA units, they just don't understand what capabilities they bring to the fight. Again, classes and training exercise will determine the capabilities and limitations of the ADA unit.

Battle Command

A/C: The units had difficulty in the area of time management and MDMP. Often unit took too long during the MDMP and produced sub-standard products. The unit had SOPs on these areas but failed to follow them. A positive observation was in the area of battle tracking and situational awareness. Operation centers seemed to have good systems in this area. This information was shared within the TOC as well as to the commanders and subordinate units. This "big picture" provided by the TOC assisted the commanders in making critical decisions throughout the battle. In contrast, the commanders' guidance was not as clear and his staff had difficulty-producing COA. Additionally, sub-unit tasks and purpose were not clearly understood and commanders left the operations order without a clear understanding of the task force plan.

The final area to address under battle command is the maneuver line companies and specialty platoons. One area that requires improvement is Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB). Only one company from each type of unit received positive comments in this area. In the area of maneuver, only one company needed overall improvement in its maneuver

and one unit that was inconsistent with its maneuvers (see table 6). While the final two units received positive comments. In the area of command and control, three of the four active units received positive comments, while the fourth unit was inconsistent (see table 6). The final area evaluated was in combat service support. The unit showed inconsistency in three of its four units, while one unit received positive comments in combat service support. The other BOS that required improvement for all units were; the proper employment of fire support, engineer support, and ADA assets (the unit did employ organic passive air defensive measures). The battalion mortar platoon needed to work on FDC procedures, mortar gunnery skill, mortar integration into the fire plan, and situational awareness. The medical platoons had minimal coordination and integration into the task force MDMP. The medical platoon leader needs to provide his expertise in the MDMP to ensure all assets and procedures are in place for each operation. On the positive observation, basic medical care was effective for all units resulting in a decrease of died of wounds (DOW) rate. Therefore keeping unit strength at an optimal rate for combat effectiveness. Scout Platoons were not compared due to the priority unit using a Cavalry Troop to conduct many of the reconnaissance missions. Therefore, not providing accurate assessments of the Task Force scouts.

Priority Unit: The unit had difficulty in the area of time management and MDMP. The unit had difficulty building time lines, also difficulty was observed in conducting simultaneous tasks and prioritizing them while adhering to the time line. Often MDMP took too long and resulted in producing sub-standard products. The units had SOPs on these areas but failed to follow them. A positive observation was in the area of battle tracking and situational awareness. The units improved throughout the rotation sharing information within the TOC as well as to the subordinate units, and the commanders. The “big picture” provided by the TOCs assisted the

commanders in making critical decisions throughout the battle. In the area of command and control, the commander gave written guidance to the staff. He gave critical tasks, and desired end-state. This type of guidance proved to be very effective to ensure the staff understood the commander's intent and desired end state.

The final area to address under battle command is the maneuver line companies and specialty platoons. IPB was a weakness, only one company from each type of unit received positive comments in this area (see table 6). Under the maneuver category, one unit received positive comments, two companies needed areas of improvement and the final company was inconsistent in maneuvers. During combat service support, the unit received positive comments in three out of four units, while the fourth unit received "needs area of improvement" comments (see table 6). The other BOS that required improvement for all units were the proper employment of fire support, ADA, and engineer assets.

The mortar platoon needed to work on FDC procedures, battle tracking, mortar gunnery skills, and mortar integration into the fire plan. The mortars received positive comments on occupation for mortar position occupation, noise and light discipline and the maintenance of all vehicles and weapon systems. The medical platoon was not integrated into the task force MDMP, but did develop a plan after the maneuver was established. On a positive observation, the platoon's situational awareness and battle tracking improved. This resulted in a quicker response to medical requests, and the DOW rate dropped throughout the rotation.

Analysis: Both types of units shared many of the same strengths and weaknesses in battle command. The significant difference was in the command and control of the maneuver companies (see table 6) and the commander's guidance issued by the task force commanders. The reason for these differences is that A/C units get more time to command and control their

units prior to CTC rotations. The priority unit commander's guidance was clearer because he wrote it down and took the time to make sure his staff understood his intent. Based on my experience as a former O/C, I believe the priority unit commander was more willing to take advice from his O/Cs and eSBn counterpart, because he wanted to learn proper procedures. This idea of writing guidance out for staffs is a tool NTC encourages for all types of commanders.

Post CTC Training

The final comparison of units is that of a post CTC rotation and or gunnery cycle. Often upon return to home station both types of units will undergo dramatic changes in personnel. Key leaders and soldiers will be moved to new assignments and positions. The focus on the lessons learned from these training events is often lost or not seen in the same manner by a second party. The priority unit will conduct less maneuver training in a post CTC rotation year.⁷ The active unit will go into a support cycle upon return from a CTC rotation. They to are conducting less maneuver training then prior to a CTC rotation. In the CTC prep years the average maneuver battalion spend 15.59 days in the field out of the total of 39 training days. In the year prior to a CTC the average time is 21.2 days of the 39 training days a year. In contrast on a post CTC year the unit spends 13.78 days in the field, while in a non-CTC cycle the average time is on 8.2 days of the 39 training days in a year.⁸

This chapter has focused on the preparation of a priority unit for gunnery with and without support from the eSBn. It has shown how well a priority unit did in comparison to a unit without eSBn support and to an active duty battalion. Lanes training was also addressed in relationship to how the eSBn provided coaching and mentoring to units prior to formal evaluations. Finally, this chapter compared and contrasted a priority unit with eSBn support to an active unit during a CTC rotation to see how close the priority unit came in training compared to an active unit.

Notes

- ¹ Commander, U.S. Army Armor School. (1996)*Tank Gunnery (Abrams)* 17-12-1-2.
- ² FORSCOM/ARG/USAR Regulation 350-1, United States Army Forces Command. p.12.
- ³ FORSCOM/ARG/USAR Regulation 350-1, United States Army Forces Command. P.13.
- ⁴ FORSCOM/ARG/USAR Regulation 350-1, United States Army Forces Command.
- ⁵ FORSCOM/ARG/USAR Regulation 350-1, United States Army Forces Command. p.15
- ⁶ FORSCOM/ARG/USAR Regulation 350-1, United States Army Forces Command. p.36
- ⁷ Army Research Division, Effects on Training Accomplishments and Readiness. Chapter 2.
- ⁸ Army Research Division, Effects on Training Accomplishments and Readiness. p.21

Part 4

Recommendation and Conclusion

Training is the Army's top priority; it prepares us to fight. As leaders, our sacred responsibility is to ensure that no soldier ever dies in combat because that soldier was not properly trained.

— Carl E. Vuono

Priority units with eSBn perform better in gunnery than non-priority units. Once given the mission by the priority unit commander to assist units, eSBn teams have proven to be effective in lane train-up as seen in tables 3 through 5. Additionally, priority units with eSBn support shoot tank gunnery almost as well as an active tank battalions as seen in figure 2. Finally, the priority unit had many of the same strengths and weaknesses as the active battalion during a NTC rotation (see table 6). During that same rotation, the eSBn team member assisted their priority unit in planning and executes their missions as a part of the rotation. The ideal concept of AC/RC training had been validated in a positive measure for the first time, (during previous rotations, eSBn members were not allowed to participate in the rotation unless to filling a critical unmanned position like an XO or S-3).

Recommendations For eSBn Qualifications

The idea of establishing the eSBn in priority units is a solid program. An issue identified is the quality of the soldier assigned? About half of the captains assigned to eSBn duty are “at

risk" to get promoted to the next rank.. One unit Administrative Officer (A/O) told me it is hit or miss, we get some extremely proactive A/C soldiers and some that use the assignment as a retirement transition. I believe our best soldiers should train the priority National Guard units.

First, I believe that more detailed work needs to be done by the active component to ensure the right people are placed in the proper duty position. All officers should have served in a primary staff officer position. Each officer must have successfully commanded a MTO&E tank company. At least one of the captains should have had two commands (the second, a headquarters company). The field grade officer must already be branch qualified before serving as the eSBn team chief. Each NCO must have at least four years of platoon sergeant time and some first sergeant experience before being assigned. Thus establishing credibility. Additionally, All NCO's must be master gunnery qualified. (some Master Gunner positions are not filled due to Army shortages) Members of the eSBn must have recently (within 18 months) completed a rotation at one of the Army's Training Centers or deployed to a contingency area of operation (ie Korea, Eastern Europe and or Southwest Asia). This experience certifies the eSBn credentials as subject matter experts on training and deployments.

Training Recommendations

I believe priority units would do better in training if training was focused on one major training requirement, for instance, gunnery qualification one year and maneuver the next year, instead of doing multiple requirements with too little time. This would provide commanders a single focus area for training. This it would also allow units to plan and execute into greater detail. An example is during a gunnery cycle, crews could shoot more preliminary tank tables prior to qualification and allow for more time to retrain unsuccessful crews. In a maneuver cycle, units would have more time to plan and rehearse training prior to execution. This would

support the NTC evaluations. Priority units have numerous requirements to meet in support of state and federal training. The chain of command should place a greater emphasis on prioritizing training requirements. This would require a change in Army regulations and qualification requirements. Additionally, training must be consistent, units should not go from 8.2 days in the field one-year to 15.59 the next, and then 21.2 days the following year. Leaders must find a steady medium for their soldiers.¹

Training and Evaluation Requirements

Currently the eSBn team provides a mentor role to the priority unit chain of command. During annual training, the priority unit receives its Training Assessment Model (TAM) evaluation. Some priority units and active soldiers believe that the eSBn team should not participate in this evaluation because of our relationship (positive or negative) with the unit. I disagree, eSBn members should provide feedback to the priority unit chain of command at all times. The role of a mentor is to coach, tutor, and counselor to guide our priority unit. These objectives can be met with formal and informal evaluations. There should be no secrets leading up to a TAM evaluation if the eSBn team is doing their job. The TAM evaluation should just confirm your strengths and weakness and provide recommendations for improvement. The TAM is not a report card but a tool to assist the priority unit commander.

Conclusion

After a six-month period of evaluating gunnery data, lane data, and CTC AARs, the researcher has accepted the hypotheses. The eSBn has been effective in its assigned mission of effectively training a National Guard priority tank battalion. Additionally, implemented training programs that maximized the limited time available to train for their wartime mission.

Notes

¹ Army Research Division, *Effects on Training Accomplishments and Readiness* ,Jan 00, 21.

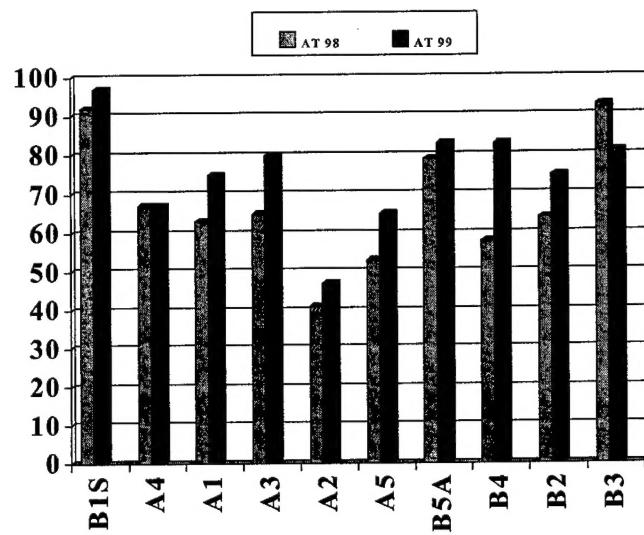


Figure 1 Tank Gunnery Scores from A.T. 98 and 99 for Priority A Unit

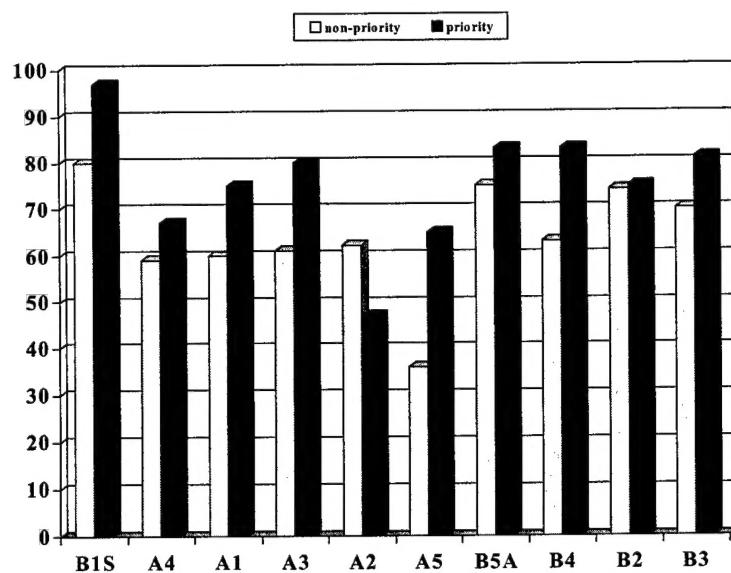


Figure 2 Tank Gunnery Scores for Non-Priority and Priority Units

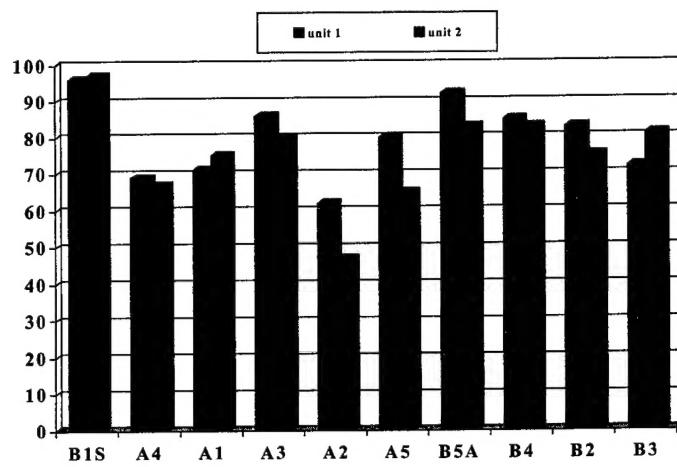


Figure 3 Tank Gunnery Scores for Two Priority Units

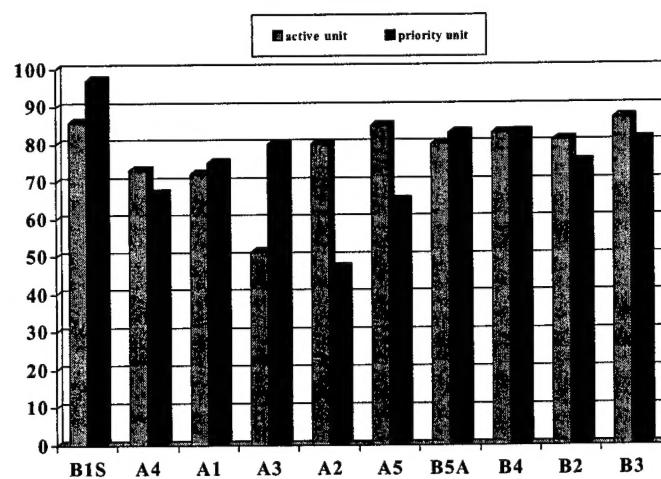


Figure 4 Tank Gunnery Scores for Priority Unit and Active Unit

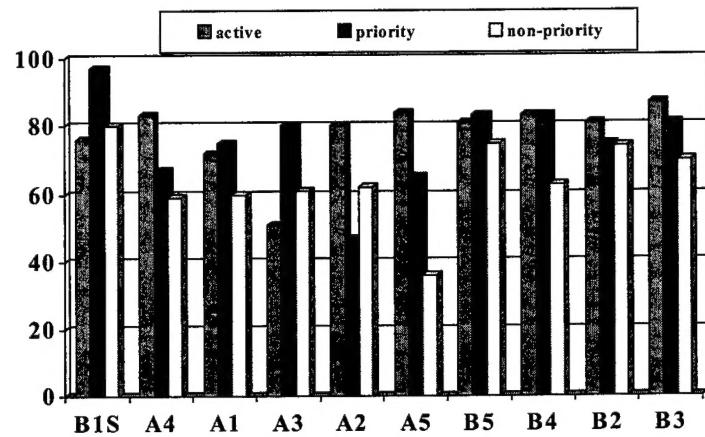


Figure 5 Gunnery Score Comparison

**CTC Comparison by Maneuver Companies
Battlefield Operating Systems**

<u>Active unit</u>	Intelligence	Maneuver	Fire Support	Air Defense	Engineer	CSS	Command&Control
A Co	-	-	-	+	-	-/+	+
B Co	-	-/+	-	+	-	-/+	+
C Co	+	+	-/+	+	-	+	+
Inf Co	-	+	-	+	-	-/+	-/+
<u>Priority unit</u>							
A Co	-	-	-/+	+	-	+	-
B Co	-	+	-/+	+	-	+	+
C Co	+	-/+	-	+	-	+	-/+
Inf Co	-	-/+	-	-/+	-	-	-

Legend (+) = Positive Remarks / (-) = Needs Improvement/ (-/+)= Inconsistency

Figure 6. CTC Comparison by Maneuver Units by Battlefield Operating System

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